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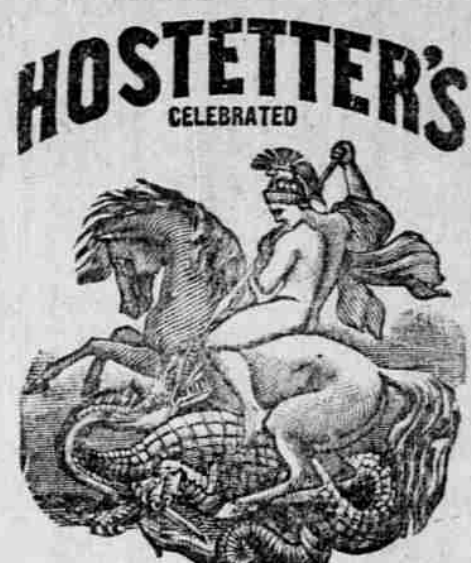
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LAND QUESTION IS TAKEN UP BY EXPERTS

The Public Lands of Hawaii—How Can They Be Disposed of in Small Lots, so as to Secure a Large Number of Small Proprietors Rather Than a Small Number of Large Proprietors—And Some Other Incidental Matter.

The desirableness for many reasons, which are superfluous to recite, of accomplishing this object is evident to all who are concerned in Hawaii. It is often a convenient method of solving a problem, to eliminate hopeless attempts at its solution.

The United States Public Land System.

This system was adapted for immense areas of land, much of which was of little or no value when the system was inaugurated. Its object was to obtain settlers and not to secure pecuniary benefits. It was perhaps not such a wasteful system at the outset as it became in recent years. But it is utterly inapplicable to the small area of public land in Hawaii. Moreover, the treaty of annexation provides that the income of and proceeds from the public land here shall be used for the benefit of the people of Hawaii, for public purposes, and not for individuals. The public lands of Hawaii are subject to the trust thus imposed upon them by the terms of the treaty, and ought to be so used as to bring the largest income which consistently with public interests can be obtained from them.

The great diversity in the value of these lands is an insuperable obstacle to placing them all under a system which allows settlers to secure squatters' titles. The grand rush in recent years for the Oklahoma lands, when opened for settlements, a rush which had to be held in check by United States troops, shows the great difficulty of securing any approach of fairness, even when the area of land is susceptible of being so placed under guard until the hour and the day when the lands could be staked out and appropriated by settlers. To undertake anything of the sort in the widely separated pieces of land here, situated as they are on different islands, often including almost inaccessible ravines and cliffs, covering large tracts of rocky or volcanic land, with now and then highly cultivated, rich parcels of great value would present a problem impossible to solve, if there were an effort to secure a fair chance to all alike.

Inducements for Small Purchasers.

If giving land to settlers is out of the question, can inducements be held out to small purchasers, by offering desirable lots of moderate area at auction, on condition that purchaser shall reside upon and improve the lots, and giving them credit for the purchase money, perhaps also exempting the lots from taxation for a term of years or from sale by the Sheriff in satisfaction of judgment debts? Or by leasing the parcels on similar conditions, giving the lessee the right to purchase? Something of this kind of experiment has been in operation in Hawaii for years, with varying success. It is probably worth a longer test, perhaps simplifying the conditions now attached to such transactions.

Prohibiting Corporations From Acquiring Large Holdings of Land.

This is what is done by the Newlands amendment in the Organic Act. But so much of the land in Hawaii is now held by large proprietors, whether incorporated or not, that the area for small holdings is not extensive. Moreover, the amendment, in making 1,000 acres the limit of land to be acquired, does not limit land-holdings to such an extent as to leave much to divide among small proprietors.

Placing Upon Large Land-holders Such Heavy Taxation as Will Compel Them to Sell Their Land to Small Holders.

If the United States Constitution would permit this thing to be done, would it be wise, and would it accomplish the intended object? Portions of the Western States have not yet recovered from the granger legislation craze. The grangers found that they could kill the goose which lays the golden eggs. The sand lots or Dennis Kearney agitation in California drove capital away from the State, so that for years enterprise was seriously weakened. It requires enormous capital to develop the resources of a country, in agricultural enterprises, as Hawaii has recently learned to its cost, as well as in manufacturing and other industrial enterprises yet to be developed here. Capital is to be invited and welcomed here, if we know what is for the general welfare, and not intimidated and scared away. I have heard it said, and not by illiterate persons only, that we have too many rich men in Hawaii. I wish we had more. Their presence does not annoy me. I do not think they are apt to be as cheerful acquaintances or companionable friends as are people of moderate means, as many Bohemians I have known. Often they are "stuck up," I suppose, and especially if they started poor. Those are the hardest to stand, the newly rich. But I am far from envying them and their accumulations here are not made—I cannot speak with knowledge of such places as California, which has long been in the habit of calling itself throttled by the Southern Pacific railroad system—by any unfair dealings with people of small means.

They had the nerve, or sagacity, or luck—often as much the latter as either of the former—to buy or sell, or hold in a way which brought wealth. How often one sees or feels that if one had done or had not done this or that thing, he would have been frightfully rich! But what is the sense or use in growling about it?

When Agassiz discovered the possibilities of copper in the Calumet and Haecla mines near Lake Superior, he obtained the wealth which enabled him to give a million dollars to Harvard University. He and his associates in that great enterprise became very rich, to the advantage of his own and coming generations.

The Bell telephone investments made by a few far-seeing, or do you please to consider them, bold spirits in the East, rolled up for the investors vast profits, no small part of which has gone to the uplifting of humanity, as well as for the comfort of the investors.

Fair and desirable as a wisely graduated progressive income tax is, I do not wish to see anything aggressive which will cause capital to keep away or go away from our midst. We want it right here, in Hawaii.

I think, then, that it would be very foolish to try to tax large landholders out of existence.

When, Then, Would You Do?

That is the unmet question to answer. I would for re-educating, encourage manual training, to raise up as many skilled artisans as would supply present and future demand in Hawaii. I would have our schools teach the elements of political as well as of individual economy and civics, or the duties of good citizens, and health rules.

I would encourage all efforts to produce a healthy public sentiment, hoping that it would be shared by people of large means, on the subjects of promoting the health and happiness of manual laborers, and of dignifying labor of the land. It is not by patronizing or pauperizing people that good is done. It is by showing and doing things which make

them feel that they are sharers in our common humanity.

The co-operative system of labor has undoubtedly some good things in it, which are practical and wise. On the large plantations, holding out inducements for permanent residence, by making homes which are sanitary and attractive, would in many cases find quick appreciation and response. But all these, and many other like things, will be done voluntarily in order to be effective.

All this means that I see no compulsory way of inducing the growth of small homes, but many things which can be done to encourage them.

The Menace of Enormous Accumulations of Wealth in Individuals and in Corporations.

That is another story. Carnegie, as well as Debs, has tackled the problem. The best thinkers of the age are working over it. The honorable Charles R. Bishop, bereft of his own lovely home in our midst, is in his own way solving it, by helping in the making in Hawaii of homes for others. And not a few are seeking a similar solution. Two or three women in Wailuku in their settlement work are doing more in the same direction than are all the agitators in Chicago or New York. Those are the people, many, to be envied, who have the ability or capacity for sympathy with others, and who do not (as I am now doing) take it out in talk. The problem, however, will yet be solved, and not by a cataclysm. ALFRED S. HARTWELL.
April 17, 1901.

ALLAN HERBERT'S VIEWS.

Editor Advertiser: Now that we have Jared Smith with us to establish an experiment station to teach our natives and others "how to plant and what to plant," it is of importance that we should find suitable and available land to plant thereon cabbages and turnips; or to put our landless people in possession of their legitimate rights.

It is of importance to this island that the truth should be told, and as honest men we should not be afraid to tell it, as to the opportunities for small industries of diversified agriculture.

Small holdings of land for horticulture, viticulture and agriculture are certainly a matter we are interested in and upon which the future of this island depends if we desire Statehood.

Were I not from habit of writing and want of education, quite untrained for writing for the press and public, I might do myself and the subject justice; but this is a subject that would almost make the dumb speak.

I shall therefore have to content myself with stating a few facts as they have come under our observation.

In calling public attention to this home-stead matter I desire that it should be known that I have no private aims to be affected thereby, nor have I any animus whatever, as I have passed three-score and ten and am amply provided for. My only object is to do what little good I can on my way. I am particularly anxious to do what little good I can for the natives. I have nothing but the happiest remembrances of aloha and kindness from the high and low during the thirty years I have lived among them.

I have for all these years taken a lively, and I hope practical, interest, both as a citizen and as Government Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry, and have introduced and cultivated tropical trees and plants in ample variety. I have worked to improve and conserve the natural forest and streams of these islands. Having labored for years in this matter, I naturally protest against the wanton destruction of our forest by fire, ax and the indiscriminate pasturing of cattle. I desire to make one more appeal to our people and Legislature—one more cry in the wilderness—for if something is not done at once to preserve the small remnants of our once beautiful and noble forest, it will not be long before it will share the same fate as the poor natives who once lived in the fertile valleys and sea shore of the Islands!

I have been a successful cultivator of the soil in these islands for the past twenty-five years, and, having had leisure and opportunity for extended personal observation as well as my enthusiastic delight in the subject itself, which has lightened my labors in exploring our native forests, I may also be permitted to say that I am quite familiar with almost every tract of Government land on the islands, and will from time to time try to describe them, their location, climatic conditions and their suitability for various products.

Waianae District, Oahu.—We have three tracts of Government or crown lands containing an area of 41,455 acres; one of these tracts called "Luahalei," contains an area of 14,772 acres. The present lease expires in August, 1901, or in less than four months.

As the present lessee has had this land since 1851, or for fifty years, for less than three cents per acre, there can be no injustice in having this land divided up into small holdings for our homeless people.

This tract, without exception, is one of the most valuable of Government lands on Oahu, and surpasses any other for richness and fertility of soil. Ten thousand acres of this land should be reserved by our present Legislature as a Government forest reservation, and the other 4,773 acres divided up into small homesteads of from ten to twenty-five acres each. On this land there are now five or six hundred acres under sugar cane, where the yield is said to be enormous. On the remaining portions would grow almost anything. Surface water can be had now that the small gasoline engine is so inexpensive and simple. This land adjoins Waianae on the Ewa side and has a frontage on the sea of five and one-half miles. The railroad line runs through this land. It is one hour or less from Honolulu by rail; the sea bathing is grand. A few hundred thousand coconut trees could be planted in the sand on the west side of the railroad, which could produce in, say six years, \$1 each in nuts. That is what Linderman on Kauai receives from his coconuts at five years old. The stony ridges can be planted with sisal, aloes and other fiber plants.

I have no time or space to describe the other tract, but it is hoped that enough has been said to form an intelligent interest. What a county Waianae would make. If Waianae has a population of, say 100, on 1,400 acres, Waianae county ought to have a larger white population than Honolulu.

It was the writer's good fortune to spend a few days with Harry von Holt at Palehua in the Waianae hills, above Ewa mills, at an elevation of about 2,300 feet. Von Holt has a comfortable little lodge and about 1,000 acres of the land well fenced. Imagine my delight when in our wanderings on this inclosure out of the reach of cattle and horses, we found hundreds of young sandalwood, koa, lehua and other valuable native trees springing up and some of them as tall as one year's growth as Norries' walking-stick. This land adjoins the 14,772 acres of Luahalei and Nanakuli.

(To be Continued.)

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Whether he be at the club or in his own home it is his regular tonic and stimulant.

He has confidence in it because he knows it is pure.

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